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Behavioral space of Chinese tourists in Japan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the characteristics of behavioral space of Chinese tourists in Japan, analyzing the itinerary of package tours and the actual conditions by personal interviews. Chinese travel to Japan for tourism has been gradually liberalized and the needs grow rapidly. Chinese is also an important target for Japanese inbound tourism development. There are many regulations have been eased substantially, however, some huddles still exist, such as that form is limited to a package group tour with requirements of guarantee. Since the period after the opening of Chinese outbound tourism is still short, visits to Japan as first time for many Chinese travelers, and the experience of traveling to Japan is commonly viewed as symbolizing high social status and/or wealth. They tend to require numerous and typical attractions that symbolize Japan. The tourists also concerned with purchasing quality goods with a 'Made in Japan' label. Therefore, the behavioral space shows high orientation toward destinations in the central commercial districts of the metropolitan cities in which they can enjoy shopping and in the places where they can experience the symbolic attractions of Japan, such as Mt. Fuji, hot springs, and volcanoes.

Key words: Chinese, tourism, tourist behavior, destination, Japan

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecasted in 1999 that the number of Chinese outbound tourists would situate China as the region with the fourth-highest level of outbound tourism by 2020. Moreover, many states now recognize that China will become important for their respective inbound tourism market, and Chinese tourists have a large economic impact based given their high expenditure amounts. The increasing tendency of recent demand on outbound tourism in China is thought as the optimum chance for Japan that aims to promote inbound tourism.

In Japan, inbound tourism stagnated from 1960s to 1990s. Iwamoto (2001) showed the extremely low number

of inbound tourists in Japan compared to not only to outbound tourists but also to inbound arrivals on behalf of Japanese population. Kibe and Hara (2006) indicated that Japan had not sufficiently focused on the necessity of international tourism during the period in which Japan had succeeded in the rapid industrialization by manufacturing. Ishimori (2008) indicated that regional revitalization through the expansion of tourism is required if "local redevelopment" is a national goal, however, domestic tourism demand is now stagnating in Japan because of a declining birthrate, a rising proportion of elderly people, a growing trend toward outbound travel, and changes in travel forms. In this context, promotional activities in Japan aimed at increasing foreign tourists will make the population exchange increase and assure income from the tourism industry in destination regions (Sen, 2001).

Tourism bodies in Japan regard China as an attractive tourism market. According to the Visit Japan Campaign (VJC) that started in 2003, China is expected to be one of the most important customer markets. The amount of Chinese visitor continues to grow, despite various limitations. The number of Chinese tourists visiting Japan is expected to increase continuously in the future due to the deregulation of outbound tourism in China and further provisions of inbound tourism in Japan.

1.2. Previous studies

Most research on international tourism regards tourist flow as a "one-directional" system, as noted by Yasumura (2001). Namely, while developed countries generate tourists, developing countries accept tourists. For instance, in Thurot's model on international tourist flow, demand for international tourism only originates in developed countries, with flow reaching to developing countries (Pearce, 1995; Smith ed., 1977). However, the demand for tourism has been increasing in some developing countries because of an increase in national income, economic growth, lifestyle modification, and the expansion of the vacation system in recent years. Consequently, the number of outbound tourists from developing countries has increased.

Studies on the behavioral patterns of international tourists in destination countries or areas have appeared relatively recently (Pearce, 1995). Exceptionally, Woo and Page (1999) clarified the activity patterns of Korean tourists in New Zealand using the data acquired from a time-budget survey. They identified three types of Korean

tourists, namely, organized sightseeing-oriented visitors, shopping- and conviviality-oriented tourists, and health- and sports-oriented tourists.

Many studies originating in China focus on the amount of consumption in various destinations by Chinese outbound tourists; as a result, various economic arguments have been made (Dai and Wu, 2006; Zhang, 2005; Ma and Kou, 2006). Wang and Qi (2005) quoted display consumption theory as developed by Veblen (1899) ¹ and indicated that Chinese consumerism had a strongly conspicuous character. Du *et al.* (2002) explained that most Chinese were first-time outbound tourists, and the price of the tours was an important factor for their choice to use package tours.

Some studies take a more general view of Chinese travel behavior in foreign countries. Arlt and Feng (2007) examined Chinese travel patterns in Europe. They noted that Chinese tourists were interested in well-known cities and famous sightseeing spots. Furthermore, visiting popular places is recognized as a symbol of social status or wealth in Chinese society. Ryan and Mo (2001) reported on demographic profile of the Chinese tourists who have visited New Zealand; they mainly consist of well-travelled segment with above-average income and educational attainment. The main motive of their vacation is to see new places that have not been previously visited.

Suzuki (2002) noted that outbound travel for Chinese tourists might represent a certain status symbol insofar as their needs were related to current tour forms that include characteristics such as a busy schedule and visits to multiple destinations.

There is sparse research on this issue from a geographical viewpoint. Only Liu and Du (2006) have conducted spatial analysis on the cognition of tourist attractions for Chinese who visited Tokyo; they clearly showed that the number of visited places increased and the demand for shopping preference became higher as vacation length increased.

A substantial number of studies tend to focus on the major economic impact of international tourism. Concerned with international tourist flow, most analyses have been based on a simple analysis of statistical data in which countries or regions are analyzed as a spatial unit. Because China's outbound tourism has a short history, a limited number of studies exist, most of which tend to focus on political or market activities. Since studies on tourist activities also have not provided adequate results, detailed analyses are now needed regarding the behavioral characteristics of tourists in the geographical context.

The purpose of this study is to examine the characteristics of behavioral space of Chinese tourists in Japan based on the analysis of package tours and the

actual conditions using personal interviews.

2. Japan as tourist destination for Chinese

2.1. Outbound tourism in China

In China², the 'Reform and Opening' policy started in 1978, when exchange between China and many foreign countries were become actively. Then, although international tourism gradually showed a developing trend, inbound tourism³ was more of a focus until the latter half of the 1990s because foreign tourists provided easy access to get foreign currency. In those days, most Chinese outbound travel was oriented toward for business, public affairs or studies. The first private outbound travel was only permitted for Guangzhou City citizens wishing to visit relatives in Hong Kong in 1983. This policy was then expanded to all of Chinese, and the extent of destinations has enlarged to more broadly.

Outbound travel for personal motivations has been authorized in China since March 1997, when the 'Provisional Regulations on the Management of Outbound Travel by Chinese Citizens at Their Own Expense' was jointly executed by China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and China Ministry of Public Security (CMPS). Thereby, outbound group travel in three or more persons became possible through purchasing package tour, which specified Chinese travel agencies arrangement.

Countries/territories that Chinese people can visit as destinations are determined by intergovernmental deliberations and designated as ADS (Approved Destination Status). The Chinese travel destinations were limited to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Macao in 1997. Entering in the 21st century, the number of ADS-approved destinations has increased quickly, especially since the Chinese affiliation with WTO (World Trade Organization) in December 2001. The number of ADS-approved destinations was 104 in September 2009. As a result, there is a rapid growth in the number of Chinese outbound travelers, particularly the private travelers, since the removal of the limitation on outbound travel paid for by their own expenses in China (Figure 1). About 90 percent of Chinese outbound travelers tend to travel to destinations in Asia.

2.2. Chinese tourist to Japan

An improvement in relations between China and Japan was realized in September 1972, and the Embassy of Japan in China was established in Beijing in 1973. The exchange between the two countries then advanced in terms of culture and infrastructure; direct flights were established in 1974 from Tokyo and Osaka to Beijing and Shanghai. Since then, Chinese visits to Japan have gradually grown

even though influenced by changes in the immigration system as well as domestic and international conditions (Figure 2). In particular, as the Japanese government has formulated policies to promote inbound tourism since 2000, including the Visit Japan Campaign (VJC) in 2003, China has been the most important target segment after Korea, Taiwan, the United States, and Hong Kong.

Chinese visit to Japan for tourism in a form of group tours was permitted starting in 2000, and the first tourist group visited Japan in September 2000. At first, the acquisition of visas to Japan was limited to the family register owner of Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong.

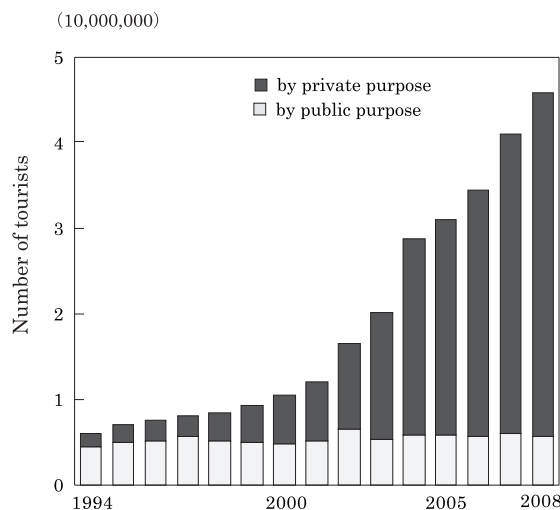


Fig.1 Changes in outbound Chinese travelers, 1994-2008.
Source: China Statistical Yearbook.

From September 2004, the issuance permission for Chinese tourists was expanded to Tianjin, Liaoning, Shandong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang. Then the permitted region was enlarged to the entire Chinese starting in July 2005. Chinese used to be able to obtain tourist visas to Japan only at the Embassy in Beijing. However, in addition to Beijing, it became possible for people to obtain visas at the resident Consulate General of Japan in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, and Shenyang and as well as Consular office of Japan in Dalian and Qingdao, thus shortening of the evaluation period with regard to visas.

There was an initial limitation on the size of group of 5 to 40 persons for Chinese visits to Japan. The expansion to the family travel consisting of two to three family members was initiated in March 2008. Individual travel has also approval in July 2009, and now a single person can visit Japan for tourism⁴. Previously, this individual traveler would have been obliged to dispatch tour guides from both travel agencies of China and Japan for the group and family travels. But today, guides are unnecessary for individual free travel, thus allowing high flexibility in their activities.

There are two kinds of tourist visas for Chinese to Japan now, such as visas for group leisure travel and individual leisure travel. While a Chinese tourist must deposit at least 50,000 RMB guarantee before their departure in both cases, the latter travel form entails more impediments in Japan than the former. For example, individual travelers have to earn an annual income of more than 250,000

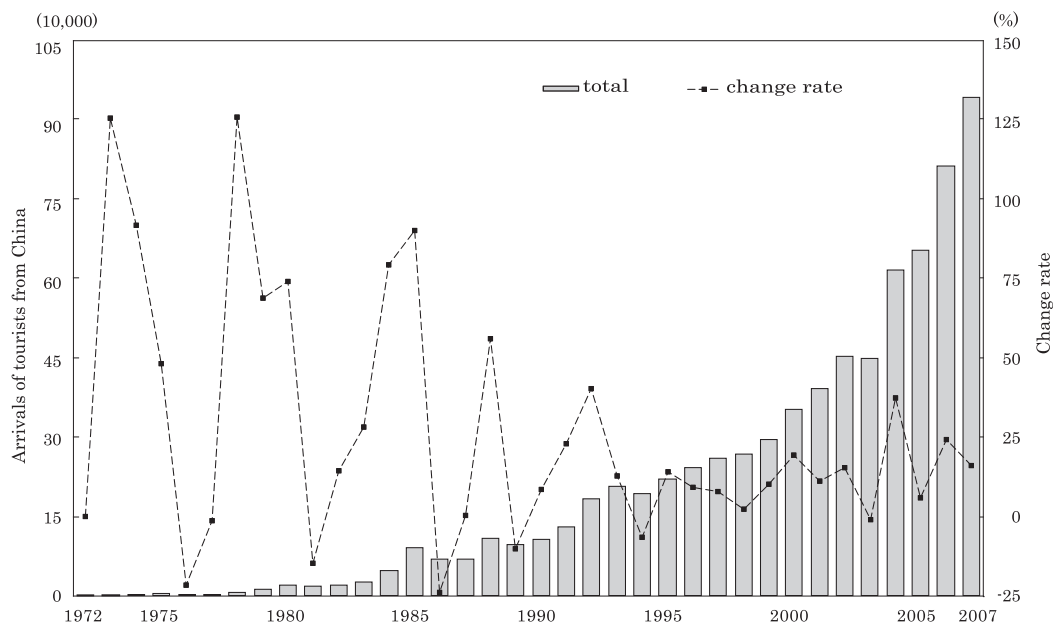


Fig.2 Visitor arrivals from China to Japan, 1972-2007.

Source: Japan National Tourism Organization.

Note: change rate = $100\% \times (\text{visitors of concerned year} - \text{visitors of the last year}) / \text{visitors of the last year}$

RMB5, and furthermore, they must buy a package tour (that is, at least a package of airline tickets and hotel coupons). Figure 3 shows the origin of Chinese tourism to Japan from 2003 to 2006. Most origins are concentrated in eastern coastal area, where the regulations on visit to Japan were removed early and wealthy classes are dominant. In contrast, there are few outbound tourists in the inland area. It is assumed that a reason for this regional difference involves gaps in economic development or infrastructure improvement between these regions. In addition, a regional disparity is due to the visa application process necessary to travel to Japan. Because of anxieties over illegal over-stayers, the investigation of residents in the inland is much stricter than in the eastern coastal area, where many well-to-do persons live.

2.3. Promoting system of Chinese travel to Japan

The application for tourist visas must be executed by proxy by specified travel agencies in the cases of both group and individual travel. In addition, a package tour must be prepared by travel agencies beforehand⁶.

Many stakeholders are involved in creating tour package, though the tour packages itself is solely sold to tourists by Chinese travel agencies (Figure 4). First, in Japan, project proposals and advertising tourist campaigns are aims to attract Chinese tourists by various bodies, including governments at various levels and related industry sectors. Furthermore, these bodies positively promote tourist attractions, thereby supporting travel agencies in both Japan and China. The travel agencies in China analyze the Chinese outbound market as well as customer needs in order to propose tours. In contrast, the travel agencies in Japan perform the investigation of a given destination in order to, for example, adjust routes or examine practicability. Model tours are created based on this work. Then, practicability is examined through monitoring tours in which various bodies participate, including the above-mentioned bodies, the members of the tourism industry, administrators, as well as press staffs. After monitoring, the tour can be established as a regular tour commodity.

While the travel agencies in China chiefly coordinate the advertisement and sale of such tour commodities for groups together with the visa process, Japanese travel agencies arrange for accommodation, transportation, and other tourist facilities in Japan. For both travel agencies, there is an obligation that tour guides be sent from the two countries as travel companions during the execution of the package tours.

Note that an invitation letter from an approved travel agency in Japan is needed, while the Japan's group tourist visa is processed by proxy by approved travel agencies

that the Consulate of the Embassy of Japan in China has specified.

A limited number of travel agencies in China handle package tours for group travel to Japan, including visa application. The China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) approves the tour agencies that can operate tour commodities for Japan. There were 268 approved travel agencies in May 2009. In contrast, the Japan Tourism Agency (JTA) approves travel agencies that can operate Chinese group tours and issue invitation letters for package tours. A total of 196 travel companies in Japan can handle Chinese tours as of May 2009.

3. Chinese tourist behavioral space in Japan

When Chinese visit to Japan for tourism, it is indispensable to participate group package tours provided by travel agencies that are qualified to sell the tours to Japan. Therefore, destinations visited by Chinese tourists fall into facilities or areas included in those tours. The time schedule also depends on such tours in greatly. In other words, the behavioral space of Chinese tourist is dependent on the places and areas included in package tours. The scale of the destinations in this paper is limited to spaces, where tourists can take part in sightseeing on foot apart from vehicles.

3.1. Overview of tour packages

A database of package tour commodities advertised between October 2008 and March 2009 is used for analysis. These data were collected from the homepages of Chinese travel agencies and from investigations at China International Travel Mart (CITM)⁷ and the Chinese travel agencies selling package tours for Japan. There were 770 tours available for travel to Japan, of which the following categories were excluded from the analysis: cruise tours with no concrete information on the places visited, golf tours in which tourists only stay at one location, and free-plan tours⁸. In the case of package tour commodities combined with Korea or the United States, only the portion that involved staying in Japan was included in the analysis. As a result, 745 tours organized by 149 agencies were used for analysis of this research.

Figure 5 represents the price and schedule comparison of tours. The price of most tours is in the range of 5,000 to 6,000 RMB, though the price varies from 2,000 to 10,000 RMB or more. Six-day, five-night tours are predominant. Figure 6 shows the price fluctuation of a given Chinese package tour to Japan. This tour involves a typical six-day stay in Japan advertised by a major travel agency in the Guangdong province and advertised in the newspaper, Guangzhou Daily. Note that when Chinese citizens apply to participate in a tour sold by a travel agency, and ask for permission the visas to Japan takes more than ten days.

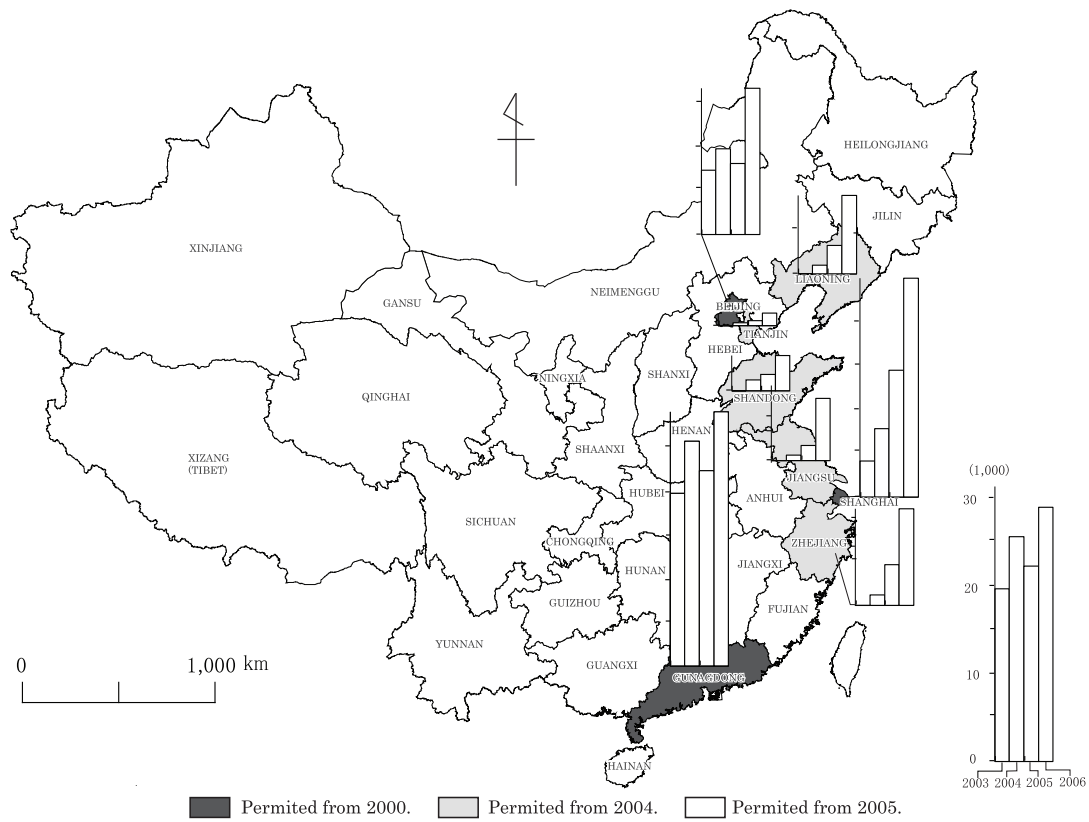


Fig.3 Origin of Chinese group tourists to Japan, 2003-2006.
 Source: Chinese Citizen Japan Group Office Note: No data after 2006 by region .

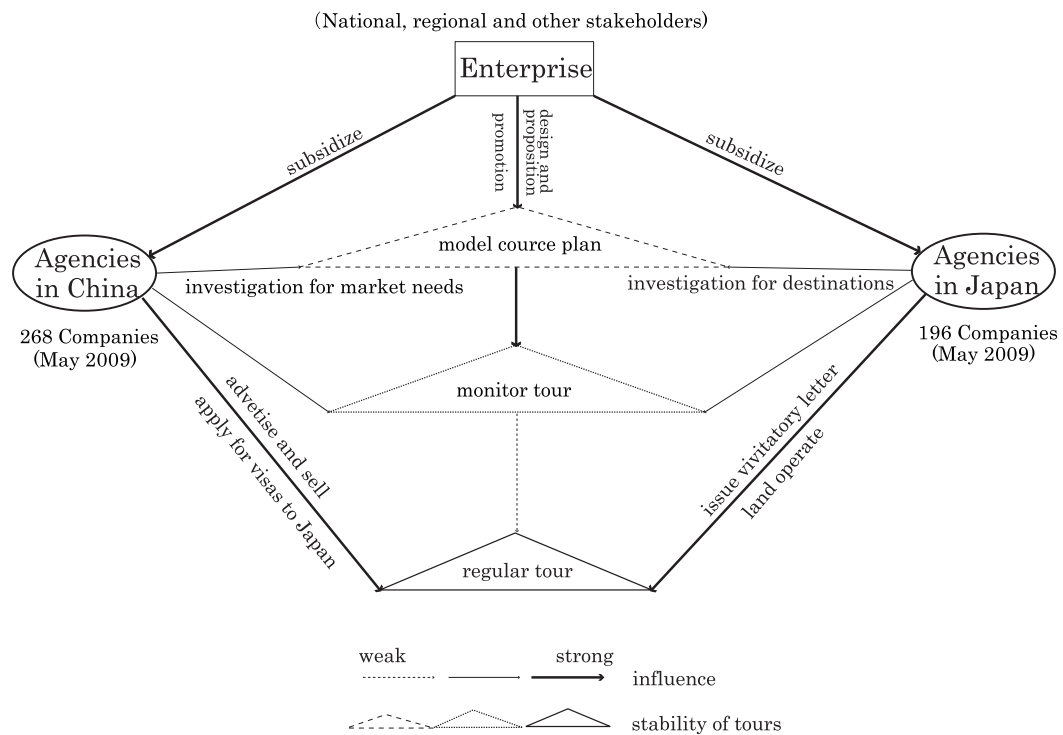


Fig.4 The creation process of new tour commodities.
 Source: Based on the interview to a travel agency.

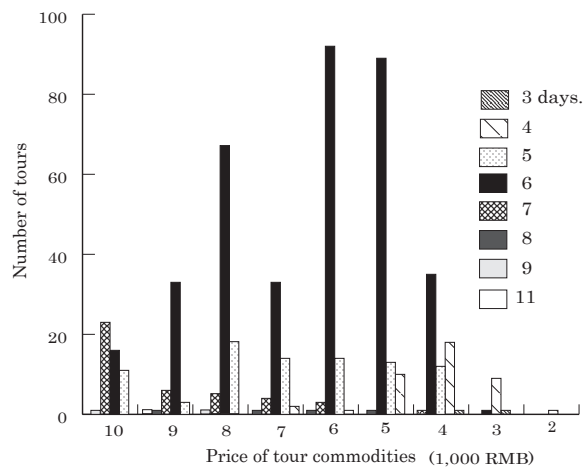


Fig.5 Number of days and prices of Chinese package tours to Japan, October 2008-March 2009.

Source: Based on the survey for tour commodities (October 2008-March 2009)

Therefore, although the data were derived from newspaper that publishes at the middle of every month, actual tours were done early the following month. The price of the tours tends to decrease gradually. The monthly price variation increased around Chinese New Year (January or February), the cherry blossom period (April), summer vacation (July and August)¹⁰, and China's National Day (October).

3.2. Characteristics of destinations

3.2.1. Distribution

Spatial unit of a destination in this paper was limited to a space in which tourists can engage in sightseeing by foot. Furthermore, destinations of different types that could be reached by foot were distinguished. There were some cases in which destinations were not specified, for example, when there was a description 'staying overnight in Nagoya', the Nagoya station was designated

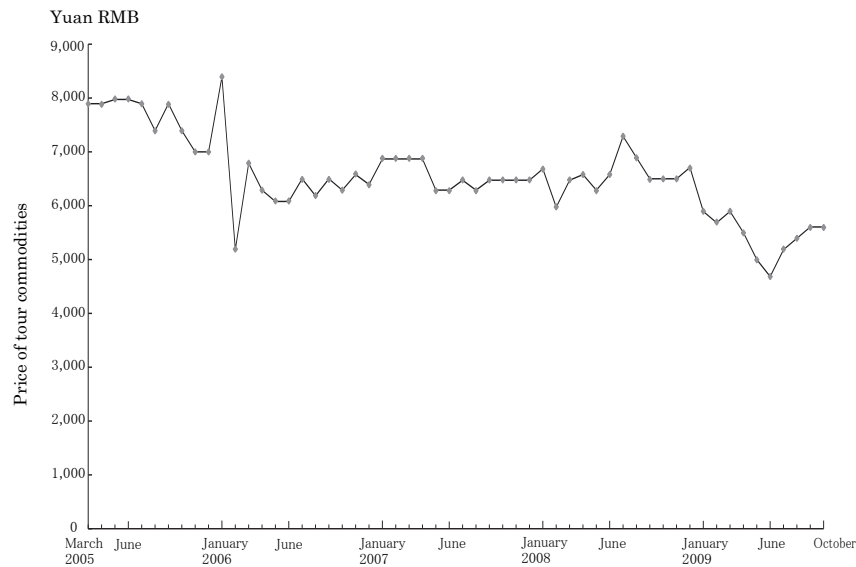


Fig.6 Changes in tour commodity price for travels to Japan, March 2005-July 2009.

Note: Average price of six days tour commodities of a major travel agency in Guangdong Province published in press advertising.



Fig.7 Distribution of destinations within package tours

Source: Based on the survey for tour commodities (October 2008-March 2009)

as the destination. As a result, the 745 tourist attractions were summarized into 348 destinations allocated in 179 municipalities. While many destinations are located in the central part of the pacific side of Japan (Figure 7), there were a few destinations in the Tohoku, Chugoku, and Shikoku regions, and some prefectures did not have destinations at all. Furthermore, most destinations were located along expressways because Chinese tourists tend to move by chartered bus due to its inexpensive price.

3.2.2. Typology of the destinations

Mugiya (2004: 39) defined tourist resources in terms of destinations that could become attractions based on theories related to development planning. Moreover, tourist resources were roughly divided into both natural and humanistic resources; further subdivision. In contrast, Ashiba (1997: 7) insisted that tourist resources are not individual attractions, but rather they are synthetically comprised of these attractions. Referring to the classification by Tsuda (1969: 76-78), he also argued for a new typology of tourist resources, including cultural (or humanistic), natural, social, and industrial resources.

In this study, referring to Chinese motives for visiting Japan according to the Destination Survey of JNTO, destinations were classified into 11 types, namely, urban and modern landscapes, scenic natural landscapes, traditional culture and historical architecture, Onsen (hot springs) and volcanoes, shrines and temples, exhibition facilities, parks and gardens, theme parks, shopping facilities, overnight place, and others, as shown in Table 1.

The destinations involving urban and modern landscapes were mainly located in central cities and visited in order to see urbanized landscape or architecture as well as to shop. Here, the scenic natural landscape is the same as the natural tourist resource category developed by Mugiya (2004: 39). Traditional culture and historical architecture includes symbols of Japanese traditional culture as well as traditional craftworks. Exhibition facilities contain various museums and/or aquariums.

The typologies of the destinations appearing in Chinese tours to Japan is summarized in Table 1. The number of distinct scenic natural landscapes was the most numerous, but in terms of actual tour itineraries, this type of destination showed the lowest frequency of appearance individually. Arashiyama in Kyoto showed the highest frequency in the destinations of scenic natural landscapes, as it was included in 159 tours. Although there were 49 destinations involving traditional culture and historical architecture, the frequency was the highest with 2941, of which the Imperial Palace (591) was most frequently visited and the proportion of visitors visiting reaching around 80 percent of the total. Although there were a few destinations involving urban and modern landscapes, their frequency of appearance on tour itineraries was relatively high, being nearly equal to destinations involving traditional culture and historical architecture. Since the data used in this study were collected in winter, there were also tours including ski activities in the Tenjin ski field at Mt. Fuji, for example, and in the Sapporo Kokusai ski area in Hokkaido.

Table.1 Types of destinations in Chinese package tours.

Category	Numbers	Total Frequency	Typical destinations (frequency of appearance) ³⁾
Urban and modern landscape	32	2782	Shinsaibashi (518), Shinjuku (508), Odaiba (453)
Scenic natural landscape	61	844	Arashiyama (159), Oshinohakakai (116), Lake Kawaguchiko (112)
Traditional culture and historical architecture	49	2941	Imperial Palace (591), Osaka Castle Park (529), Nishijin Textile Center (106)
Hot springs and volcanoes	34	1391	Owakudani (363), Half Station of Mt. Fuji (346), Lake Ashinoko (285)
Shrines and temples	38	877	Sensouji Temple (600), Heianjingu (272), Kinkakuji Temple (247)
Exhibition facilities	40	329	Kitaichi Glasswork (103), Bear Park (35), Beer Museum (19)
Parks and gardens	18	951	Heiwa Park (373), Yamashita Park (290), Odori-Koen (116)
Theme parks	15	725	TDL (607), Meriken Park (43), Fujiyuki Highland (18)
Shopping facilities ¹⁾	11	90	Aeon Mall Narita (40), Chitose Outlet Mall (20), Gotemba Premium Outlets (20),
Overnight places ²⁾	27	317	Nagoya (108), Toyohashi (49), Makuhari (29)
Others	23	108	Tenjin ski field (17), Kitahama Station (16), Hospital of Shari-Cho (11)

Note: 1) Shopping facilities such as a shopping mall in suburbs, or an outlet mall.

2) Only used for overnight.

3) The typical tourist's destinations are showed to the 3rd place of appearance of frequency.

Source: Based on the survey for tour commodities (October 2008-March 2009).

4. Chinese tourist behavior in Japan

Chinese can enter Japan for tourism only with a group leisure tour visa or an individual leisure tour visa. However, it has become obvious from author's interviews with Chinese tourists and travel agencies in Japan that there were many travelers who came with short-term visa for business and spent more time on tourism than their business by consuming package tour commodities sold in Japan. Most of these tourists visit Japan to inspect industrial factories in Japan or to attend conferences held in Japan. Therefore, it is necessary to address this tourist form as an important part of Chinese sightseeing. Here, the features of tourist behavior are examined according to two types of tourists, namely, group tour participants and inspection travelers.

4.1. Behavioral patterns for group tours

In order to clarify the features of actual behavior by Chinese tourists, interviews were performed to visitors from China at the shopping center in Odaiba between March 2008 and July 2009. Odaiba is characterized as an important destination, which appears more than 60 percent of the Chinese tour packages. Odaiba is a suitable place for the interviews, because tourists at a mall tend to have

enough free time for shopping and resting. As a result, 48 groups which including 173 people were interviewed. Here, the groups consist of Chinese travelers who spend together in Japan during the interviewing time in this study.

4.1.1 Tourists profile

Figure 8 represents the distribution of the origin of the tourists interviewed. They came from Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning province, Beijing, Shandong, Shanxi, Henan Province, Tianjin, Shaanxi, Zhejiang, Shanghai, and Guangdong, from the northern to southern China. Most of them lived in urban areas, with the highest concentration in Guangdong. Three ministries (Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning Province) in the northeast area contained a relatively large number of travelers despite the aforementioned delays in access to visas to Japan, but regarded as a market have high potential for development of outbound tourism to Japan.

In terms of the age structure of the tourists, most were in their 40s (65 people) and 60s (40 people), followed by people in their 20s (29 people). The number of women exceeded the men, except for the individuals in their 40s.

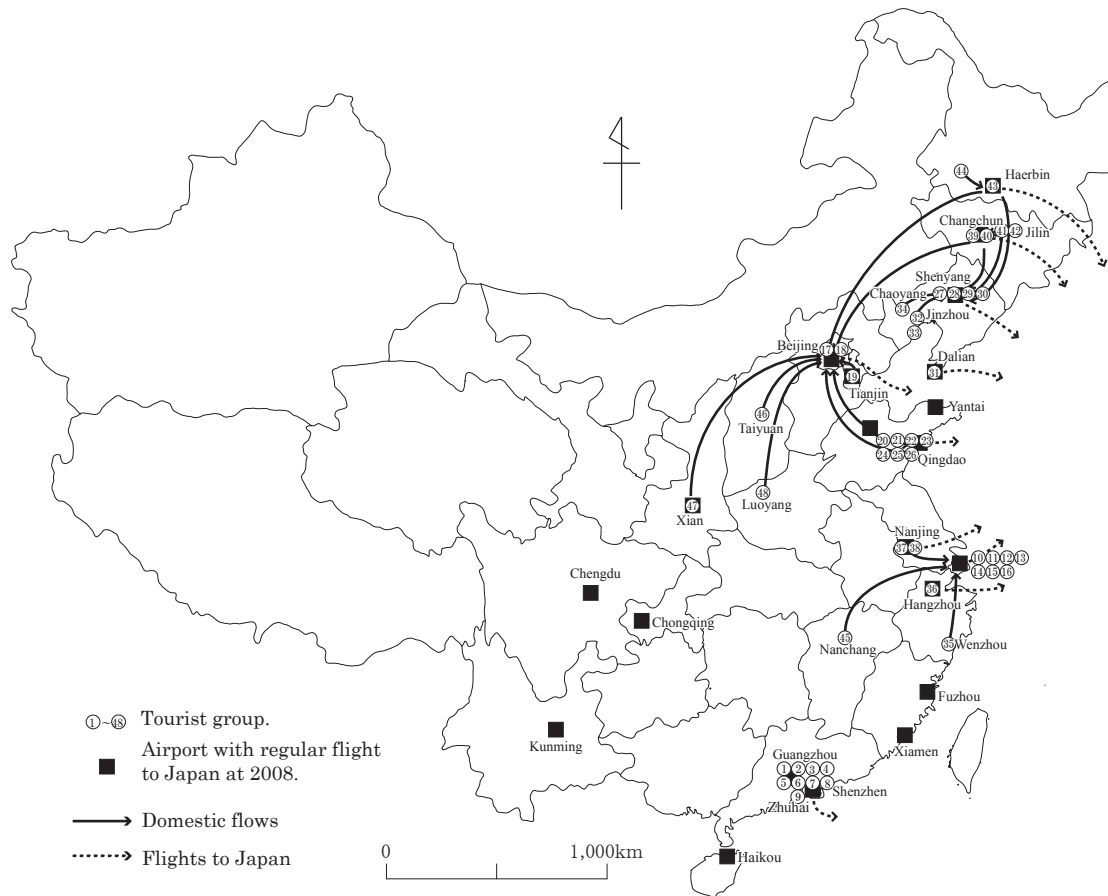


Fig.8 Origins and domestic movement of Chinese travel to Japan
Source: Based on the interview (March 2008-July 2009)

For these individuals, there was no remarkable gender difference; this category also included 12 married couples. More than 60 percent of tourists participated in package tours with family or friends, indicating the importance of travel companionship (Figure 9).

Table 2 shows that 53 percent of the interviewees were in a group of three or more people. The remainder consisted of married couple or brothers. Especially with regard to shopping activities, other friends and family tend to follow each other's purchasing decisions. This tendency was also noted by other studies on Chinese behavior in Hong Kong. For instance, Choi *et al.* (2008) analyzed the shopping activities of Chinese tourists who visited Hong Kong and clarified the high intentionality to brand goods, in which peer suggestions played an important role for making a purchase decision.

Most Chinese tourists were visiting Japan for the first time. Some tourists had previous experience in Japan, but they for business purposes using business tours. There

were some interviewees who had been to Hong Kong, Southeast Asia, Korea, and Europe. A female respondent said that she visited Japan simply because it was possible and that she had a desire to go to the United States as well. She intentionally preferred to experience many foreign countries, rather to visit certain foreign destinations for specific purpose.

With respect to the reasons for visiting Japan, most fell into sightseeing. However, some Chinese came to Japan for incentive travels¹¹, for trips given as a gift from their children, or to meet their children who studied in Japan. While there were an increasing number of tourists wishing to see cherry blossoms or being attracted to the level of development in Japan.

With regard to shopping behavior, items produced by famous Japanese firms were most popular. The items consumed by most Chinese tourists consisted of electrical appliances, digital cameras, health articles, cosmetics, dresses, and so on.

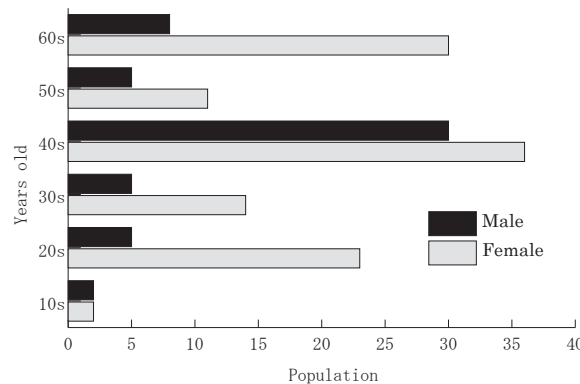


Fig.9 Number of tourists by age and Sex.

Source: Based on the interview in Odaiba, March 2008-April 2009.

4.1.2 The characteristics of behavioral space

Here, the features of behavioral space are examined based on the package tours used by Chinese tourists interviewed.

In terms of the length of the tours, 7 were for five days, 16 were for six days, 5 were for seven days, and 4 were for ten days. A similar trend can be found in other studies; for example, Jin (2009) showed that tours for six days were predominant in package tours by Chinese agencies. The two cases of tours lasting ten days included travel to Korea; of the ten days, about five days were spent in Japan.

Figure 10 shows a schedule of one of the package tours. This six-day tour is characterized as a typical tour

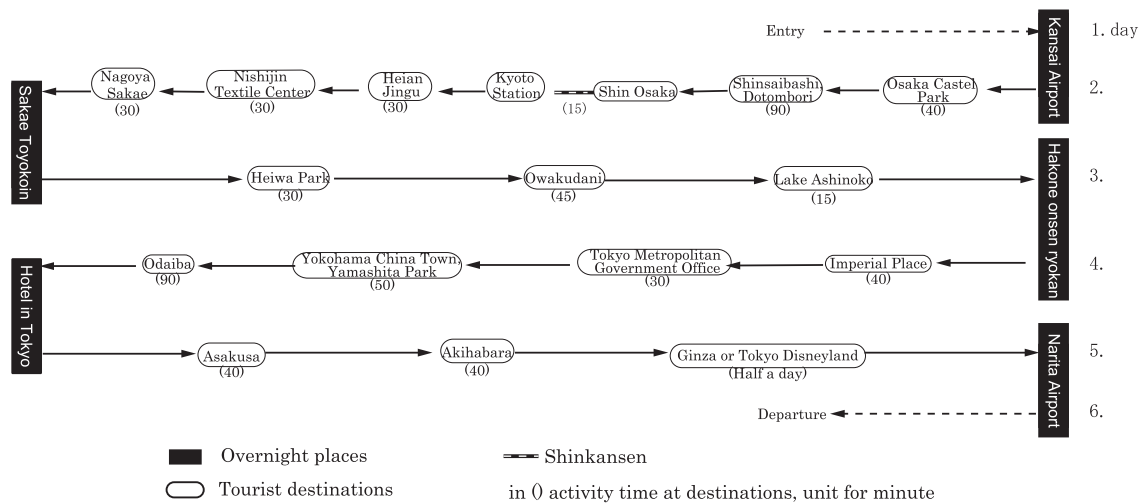


Fig.10 Itinerary of a leisure group tour.

Source: Based on the schedule of No.12 within table 2.

Table.2 Profile and motivations of interviewed Chinese tourists in Japan.

Group No.(1)	Number of member	Accompanied with (2)	Experience in Japan (3)	Motivation or purpose of visit
①	1	△	f	Because the price of tour is down
②	3	■	f	Sightseeing
③	1	△	f	Because the price of tour is down
④	1	○	f	Sightseeing and shopping
⑤	10		f	Cherry blossom and modrnlty
⑥	6	△	f	Cherry blossom and modrnlty
⑦	7	○	f	Sightseeing
⑧	1	☆	f	Because the price of tour is down
⑨	1	△	f	Incentive tour
⑩	8	○	f	Shopping
⑪	1		f	Because always wanted to visit Japan
⑫	2	■	f	Sightseeing
⑬	1	△	f	Incentive tour
⑭	3	■	f	Because always wanted to visit Japan
⑮	6		f	Shopping
⑯	2	■	f	Present travels from their children
⑰	2	■	f	Cherry blossom/Warm/Easy to take visa
⑱	3	△	f	Business tour
⑲	7	■	f	Incentive tour
⑳	8	■	f	Family event, sightseeing modernity
㉑	4	△	f	Sightseeing Modernity
㉒	4	■	f	Honeymoon
㉓	2	○	f	Honeymoon
㉔	2	○	f	Visit their children who study in Japan
㉕	3	■	f	Sightseeing
㉖	6	△	f	Visit their children who study in Japan
㉗	1	☆	f	Sightseeing
㉘	2	☆	f	
㉙	2	■		Sightseeing
㉚	2	■	f	
㉛	6	☆	f	Incentive tour
㉜	2	■	f	Sightseeing
㉝	2	■	f	Incentive tour and sightseeing modernity
㉞	6	△	f	Incentive tour and sightseeing modernity
㉟	4	■	f	To have a relaxing holiday
㊱	3	■	f	Store administration is favorable
㊲	5	△	f	Relaxation and the price of tour is down
㊳	3	■	f	
㊴	8	■	f	Visit their children who study in Japan
㊵	2	○	f	Sightseeing
㊶	2	■	f	Cherry blossom
㊷	3	■	f	Present travels from their children
㊸	8	■	f	Shopping
㊹	6	△	f	Shopping
㊺	2	△	f	Relxation after retirement
㊻	3	■	f	Enjoy Japan
㊼	2	■	f	Sightseeing modernity and Shopping
㊽	4	■	f	Suggested by family members

Note: (1) The order number is arranged by the regions for the opening time of travel to Japan.

(2) ■ : family ○ : friend △ : coworker ☆ : alone or other blank : unknown

(3) f: first visit

Source: Based on the interview in Odaiba, March 2008-April 2009.

Table.3 Shopping activities of Chinese tourists in a group business tour.

Profile of tourists						Purchase list		
Case	Sex	Age	Occupation	Domicile	Annual income (10,000 RMB)	Visit Japan	Items	Purchase spot Expenditure (1,000 yen)
A	m	46	Director of the company	Guizhou	20	first	Wh,Gn,Sh,Fo,Et	①②③④⑦ 40
B	m	44	Director of the company	Guizhou	20	first	Co,Gn,Sh,Fo	①③④ 220
C	m	43	Director of the company	Guizhou	20	first	Sh,Gn,Fo	①⑦ 180
D	m	42	Director of the company	Guizhou	20	first	Wh,Fo,Et	①②③⑦ 30
E	m	38	Employee of the company	Guizhou		first		
F	m	57	Professor	Zhejiang	30	first	Hd,Cs,Fo	⑥⑦ 10
G	m	45	Professor	Zhejiang	10	first	Wh,Gn,Sh,Pm,Mc,Hd,Et	①⑦ 35
H	f	43	Professor	Zhejiang	12	first	Co,Wh,Pm,Cha,Et	①②⑤⑦ 50
J	f	41	Director of the Institute	Zhejiang	10	first	Wh,Rc,Pm,Hd,Cs,Cha,Et	①⑤⑥⑦ 50
K	m	30	Lecturer	Zhejiang	8	Studied	Fo,Et	⑦ 90

Note: Sex: m-male f-female

Goods type: Co-Cosmetic, Gn-Germanium necklace, Sh-Shaver, Rc-Rice cooker, Wa-Wristwatch, Pm-Pedometer, Hd-Hair dye, Mc-Mosquito coil, Cs-Commemorative stamp, Cha-Charm, Fo-Food, Et-the others.

Purchase spot: ① -Shinjuku ② -Asakusa ③ -Odaiba ④ -Isawa ⑤ -Takeda Shrine ⑥ - the half station of Mt. Fuji
⑦ -others

1) Blank means unknown.

2) The amount of consumption rounds off the amount within the limits which the author has grasped, and was taken as 1,000 yen units.

Consumption at airport and other small sum expense were not included.

Source: Based on the interview for group business tours (July 2009).

with a Tokyo-Osaka route (Jin 2009). In the itinerary, because the first and sixth days were allotted for entering and departing from Japan, tourist activities were mainly performed period from the second to the fifth day. On the first day, the tourists entered Japan at Kansai International Airport and stayed at a hotel within the airport. They visited various famous destinations in Osaka and Kyoto on the second day and went to the central city area in Nagoya to stay the night. On the third day, they went to Fuji and the Hakone area to see Mt. Fuji which is the most famous volcano and most symbolic landscape in Japan for Chinese tourists. They stayed overnight at a *Ryokan*, a Japanese-style inn with hot springs, in Hakone. The tourists stayed in Tokyo and the surrounding areas and visited numerous destinations on the fourth and the fifth day. There were only about 18 hours spent on seeing famous attractions or sightseeing spots across the entire itinerary; the remaining time was allotted to transportation or sleep. The tourists stopped at Tokyo Disneyland (TDL) for the longest time of any destination. Shinsaibashi and Dotombori in Osaka and Odaiba in Tokyo had the second-longest stay. If tourists chose not to visit TDL, walking in Ginza in Tokyo was prepared as an alternative opportunity. Thus, Chinese tourists spent the most time engaged in shopping activities in a typical package tour.

4.2. Behavioral patterns of business tour group

The behavioral patterns of group business tours are analyzed here based on a follow-up survey that was carried out with the industrial inspection tour in July 2009.

4.2.1. Tourist profile

Table 3 shows the attribute for the interviewed members of the group business tour. This inspection tour group consisted of ten members, eight men and two women, aged 30 to 50. The participants comprised a research and development team of a state-owned enterprise in the Guizhou province. The members of this team were working in the regional administration of the enterprise as well as in management on the research team. They enjoyed a relatively high status in the company, with high economic conditions and plentiful income. Their purpose for visiting Japan was to inspect the production situation of industries in Japan that were relevant to their research. Most members had not previously visited Japan, except K, who had studied in Japan previously. K performed the role of translator and guide for this trip because he was skilled in the Japanese language and knew Japan in detail.

4.2.2. Characteristics of behavioral space

This trip lasted seven days (Figure 11). The trip members were on official business between the second and the third days and on tourism after the fourth day. On the fourth and the fifth days, they participated in a sightseeing tour for two days, which was sold by a travel agent in Japan. They visited many destinations in the central districts of Tokyo by themselves on the sixth day.

The tour to Yamanashi Prefecture was in the form of circuit travel and contained nine destinations, namely, the Shosen-kyo canyon, the Isawa winery, the Takeda

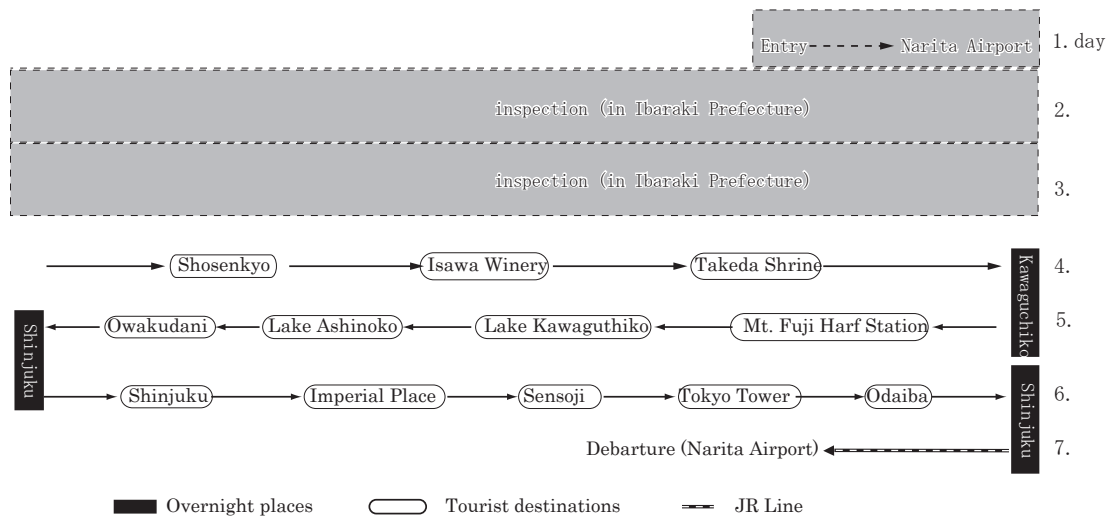


Fig.11 Itinerary of a group business tours.
Source: Based on the interview (July 2009).

shrine, lake Kawaguchiko, Kawaguchiko Onsen (with an overnight stay), the halfway station of Mt. Fuji, Lake Ashinoko, Owakudani, and Shinjuku. On the sixth day, they visited the Imperial Palace, Senso-ji temple, Tokyo Tower, Odaiba, and the Metropolitan Governmental Office, enjoying sightseeing and shopping. Because the schedule was shorter than typical group tours, behavioral space was limited from the viewpoint of the regional distribution of visited destinations. However, this case seems to share similar character with typical group tours, such as a tight schedule and a combination of plentiful destinations. With regard to the evaluation of these destinations, sightseeing and shopping in Tokyo generated a very high degree of satisfaction, as did the volcanic landscape of Owakudani. However, the evaluation of natural scenery, such as Shosenkyo, remained relatively low, because participants came from the Guizhou province, which had a similar mountain landscape.

Shopping activities of this group mainly occurred in Shinjuku and Odaiba, where the tourists purchased many items, with additional shopping at dropped points along the circuit tour. While the Chinese consumed various items, they mainly bought confectionery goods and electrical products such as shavers, wristwatches, rice cookers, pedometers, and mosquito coils. Commemorative stamps or various locally-produced goods were also purchased. The two sets of cosmetics that one interviewee purchased for his wife and daughter were the most expensive items purchased by the group, at a price of 130,000 yen each. Some members purchased shavers for 100,000 JPY. The most frequently purchased goods were germanium necklaces; total of 40 pieces were purchased by four travelers. In most cases, these purchased goods were for presents; therefore, the 'made in Japan' label was always

required by the purchaser. This shows a trend similar to that observed in the group tourists, as they also purchased the same goods in large quantities.

5. Discussions and conclusions

The opening of outbound tourism in China started in the late 1990s. Although the period after opening is still relatively short, there are clear effects on international tourism, including a rapidly-growing number of outbound travelers, a potential for tourist markets given China's ranking as the most populous and the rapidly-growing economy. Japan is an important destination for Chinese, while Chinese has also been an important target for VJC in Japan. Today, Japan aims to become a tourism-based country, in which the importance of the revitalization of the economy through inbound tourism development is highly recognized. The number of Chinese visitors to Japan is actually increasing with eased embarkation and disembarkation regulation as well as the improving infrastructure in both China and Japan.

Since group package tours that organized by travel companies are a major form of Chinese travel to Japan today, the behavioral space of Chinese tourists in Japan greatly depends on itinerary of package tours. Destinations comprised in Chinese tour package concentrate to metropolitan cities in Honshu or along highway and symbolic objectives.

In Japan, Chinese tourists tend to participate in tours with a family or a friends, enjoying cheap meals, and to buy a number of the same goods. Moreover, most of them are on their first visit to Japan and also likely followed the typical six-day package route between Tokyo and Osaka. In addition, the members of the inspection tour group interviewed here occupied a relatively high social status

in their company and enjoyed high economic conditions. These travelers tend to engage in tourist activities after their industrial inspection or official business is finished. Because the time for travel is shorter than that of typical leisure group tours, their behavioral space is limited to a narrower area. But, this space shows the characteristics similar to typical leisure group tours, such as a tight schedule and numerous destinations. Leisure group tourists are highly motivated by shopping for electrical products and cosmetics. The same tendency is observed in the business group, as they show a similar interest in purchasing the same goods.

Chinese travel to Japan for tourism has gradually expanded since 2000 due to more liberal regulations and the diversification of the available types of visas. Severe economic restrictions on travel to Japan limit those with marginal economic standing. The ability to travel to Japan in itself symbolically suggests social status and/or wealth. Moreover, the period since Chinese travel to Japan has been liberalized is still short, and so many Chinese travelers are first-time tourists to Japan. Thus, they desire numerous, typical tourist attractions that symbolize Japan. Furthermore, Chinese tourists are drawn toward greatly-needed, high-quality goods with the 'Made in Japan' label. Therefore, the spatial description of tourist activities shows a high orientation to tourist destinations that involve the central commercial district of metropolitan cities in which Chinese tourists can enjoy shopping and visit symbolically-powerful attractions, such as Mt. Fuji, hot springs, and volcanoes.

The characteristics of the tightly-scheduled Chinese tours in Japan make the metropolitan city a core element, together with a series of famous destinations; these same characteristics appear in Chinese tours to Europe and Australia. It is possible that this kind of schedule is due to the present needs of Chinese tourists, especially given that the liberalization of tourism occurred relatively recently. Alternatively, the tourist behavioral spaces enjoyed by Korean and Taiwanese tourists are wider and include more variable destinations; these tourists have enjoyed the freedom to travel to Japan for a longer period than the Chinese. This is considered to be the spatial expression of the existence of various tourist forms aimed at meeting the diversified needs arising out of the accumulation of Korean and Taiwanese tourist experience in Japan as well as the mitigation of regulations. Moreover, as compared with the tourist behavioral space of the Chinese in 2000, Chinese tourist behavioral space has broadened today, with groups of new destinations becoming independent of the conventional Tokyo-Osaka route. The increase in the number of tourists with multiple visits to Japan, the diversification of needs, and the accumulation of available

information enhance future outbound Chinese tourism to Japan. In this context, present aspects of Korean and Taiwanese tourism should eventually characterize Chinese tourism.

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- visitor, and tourist are based on Jin (2009). Outbound travel is an activity in which residents of Mainland China visit other countries or areas for stays of one day to one year of the length of stay. Among outbound travelers, outbound tourists only are considered those who pay charges individually and travel to other country or area for the purpose of tourism, including visitors to relatives or friends. Therefore, in this study, visitors and tourists are treated as different concepts.
4. Family travel was abolished when individual travel was permitted.
 5. It is also possible to demonstrate reasonable proof of finance, such as high-level employment, bankbooks, or certification of house possession.
 6. In the case of an individual tour, tourists are also required to at least use package tours or purchase both flight and hotel coupons via travel agencies.
 7. The Chinese International Travel Mart (CITM) is a well-established exhibition, and has developed into an international travel exhibition with a high degree of professionalism and internationalism. Exhibitors from 106 countries and regions attended the CITM 2008, while two-thirds were from tourism and tourism-related industries, and the rests were from the public. (<http://www.shanghaikanko.com/sight/news/news1/n1.html>)
 8. The plan to arrange only airline and hotel tickets exists in some travel agencies in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, even though group behavior under a tour guide's attendance is required for Chinese travel to Japan.
 9. Travel agencies tend to sell tours immediately before the deadline to increase the number of tourists. Finally, the visa often comes into a tourist's hand the day before they leave. There often is not adequate time for tourists from regions located far from large or local cities.
 10. There are two long holidays at schools and university in China per year, from July to August in the summer and from January to February in the winter, though there are some differences in these periods based on regional climatic conditions. The new school year begins in September and ends.
 11. There are two types of incentive travel. 'Employee consolation travel type' is a welfare program to encourage excellent employees, and 'customer invitation travel type' allows companies to invite their customers.

Notes

1. Veblen (1899) introduced the term "conspicuous consumption". Veblen used the term to indicate a behavioral characteristic of consumption employed by the nouveau riche involving lavish spending on goods and services acquired mainly for the purpose of displaying income or wealth. In the mind of conspicuous consumers, consumption is a way to gain and show social status.
2. In this study, China means Mainland China.
3. The definitions of inbound travel, outbound travel,

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